**The Mysterious Death of Mrs. Huffington**

**Instructions:** *Read the following police report to your group. As you do, find the DIRECT TEXTUAL EVIDENCE that points to your suspect as the murderer. The group that comes up with the MOST evidence for each of the suspects makes the best case, and therefore can PROVE who the murderer is. Be ready to defend your client using DIRECT QUOTES. Again, the GOAL is to be the group with the MOST EVIDENCE for each suspect.*

Mrs. Huffington was found dead on January 1st at 11 a.m. A 42 year old divorced woman without any children, she was found dead in her in-ground pool with one bullet wound to the chest. Mrs. Huffington was found by her neighbor, Mrs. Stetson, when Stetson came by with a New Year's bundt cake. No gunshots were heard the night or morning she was found, although one neighbor reported hearing a single shot two days earlier. Police interviewed three suspects in the case: Mr. Huffington, the neighbor Mrs. Stetson, and a previously employed pool cleaner, Charles.

Mr. and Mrs. Huffington divorced about 4 years prior to the murder. Apparently, Mrs. Huffington had been seeing the pool cleaner, Charles, behind Mr. Huffington’s back. This was all discovered when Mr. Huffington came home from work early on their anniversary and found Charles and Mrs. Huffington together. Mr. Huffington hardly reacted to the discovery, promptly and quietly filing for divorce and moving to France. Although friends seemed to think Mr. Huffington still loved Mrs. Huffington, he never contacted her again, ignoring both her phone calls and letters. However, Mr. Huffington was found the night of the murder at a hotel two blocks down from the murder scene. According to Mr. Huffington, he was only in town for a work-related sales conference. Mr. Huffington sold and collected rare antique firearms. According to Mr. Huffington, he did not contact his ex-wife at all and had only been in the country a day. When asked how he felt about what had happened, Mr. Huffington said, “Good. She gets what she deserves. She was a horrible woman.” Mr. Huffington seemed quite angry at the interview and was anxious to get back to France now that his conference was over. Police also found lots and lots of DNA evidence at Mrs. Huffington’s home that matched Mr. Huffington’s DNA perfectly.

Charles worked for the Huffington's until that fateful day when Mr. Huffington found him with his wife 4 years ago. Charles had been in the pool cleaning business for 11 years and loved his job more than anything. After weeks of fairly harmless flirting, Charles fell madly in love with Mrs. Huffington. She was apprehensive at first, but they soon started dating behind Mr. Huffington’s back, meeting late at night and during the day when Mr. Huffington was at work. When they were finally caught, Mrs. Huffington promptly fired Charles and explained to him that he was really just a ‘fling’ and she was actually just unhappy with her marriage. For the 3 months after lost the Huffington pool, Charles was jobless and homeless. All he knew was the pool business and when his employers found out about the affair, they immediately fired him. Charles would often stop by Mrs. Huffington’s during this time, asking for work and declaring his unending love for her. These visits became more and more frequent and Mrs. Huffington became afraid. She had a restraining order placed on Charles, and he apparently moved on. Since all this, Charles had gotten married and found other pool-related work with a new company. However, he had reportedly broke his restraining order not 3 days prior to the murder when he tried to stop by for a visit. At his interview, police noticed that Charles had a key to Mrs. Huffington’s home on a chain around his neck. According to Charles, though, he was out of town visiting relatives from 4 pm the day before the murder until 11 am the day of the murder. Investigations showed a love letter from Charles in Mrs. Huffington’s mailbox. In the letter, it said, “I know Mr. Huffington’s in town. Don’t let him come back. Only I can be the one to love you.”

Mrs. Stetson was the neighbor that found Mrs. Huffington in her pool. She was apparently stopping by with a gift of a bundt cake to celebrate the NewYear, despite the fact that Mrs. Stetson’s relationship with the Huffington's in the past has not been a positive one. Mrs. Stetson belongs to the Church of Higher Being, a recently-developed religion with very strict moral rules for living. As a part of her beliefs, Mrs. Stetson was absolutely enraged upon hearing about Mrs. Huffington’s affair and even more enraged when she heard that the Huffington's were going to violate the rites of marriage by getting a divorce. Mrs. Stetson often stopped by during the divorce proceedings to publicly yell at the two of them, calling them “useless, moronic human beings” and “idiotic non-believers”. She even went as far as to put up a sign in front of the Huffington’s home that said, “Sinners live here.” She threatened the couple often by phone and Mr. Huffington called the police twice to get her off their front porch. Mrs. Stetson also has a history of such anger, as she was even loosely connected to a plot to blow up the home of a popular politician the year before. She did not face criminal charges, but her erratic behavior caused the judge to require her have a full evaluation, where she was given strong medications to help her with her anger issues. At the interview, Mrs. Stetson mentioned that she had not taken these pills since October.

**Soooooooo…Who did it?**

Group Work

1. What EVIDENCE points to MR. HUFFINGTON as the murderer (direct quotes)? List everything below.

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2. What EVIDENCE points to CHARLES as the murderer (direct quotes)? List everything below.

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3. What EVIDENCE points to MRS. STETSON as the murderer (direct quotes)? List everything below.

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NOW, you are the lawyers hired to make a case AGAINST your suspect. Judge Ford has given you ONE of the suspects you must accuse, and it is YOUR job to come up with AT LEAST THREE reasons why you think this person committed the murder. In other words, make THREE conclusions about your character that makes them seem suspicious. For each reason, you MUST have direct text evidence to support your thinking. This part is will be done individually at first, then the groups will comprise their reports together to create one FINAL report. All reports will be done on your own sheet of paper.

**Use the following to guide your response:**

* What is the reason you think this person is guilty?
* What textual evidence shows us this reason is true, according to the police report?
* Explain how this text evidence proves both the reason AND the accused’s guilt in this case.

You MAY come up with more than the three reasons to strengthen your case.

**------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**We are ACCUSING \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the murder of Mrs. Huffington.**

**Mr. Huffington**

**Mr. Stetson**

**Charles**